

A
DEFENCE OF THE ANTIDOTE
AGAINST

Mr. Baxter's

Palliated Cure of

Church Divisions

WHEREIN
Mr. *Baxter's* Contradictions and Inconsistencies,
with the Truth, and with Himself, are
clearly discovered : And the great
question about Conformity
briefly stated,
In a Letter to Mr. Richard Baxter.

By *Edward Bagshaw.*

*How long do yee halt between two Opinions, 1 Kings 18. 21.
Should not the multitude of words be answered? and should a
Man full of Talk be justified? Job 11. 2.*

*Thou canst not bear them which are evil, and thou hast tried
them which boast themselves to be Apostles, and are not, and
hast found them Lyars. Rev. 2. 2.*

Printed in the Year 1671.

DEFENCE OF THE AMBROSIO

ACADEMY

THE AMBROSIO

Building One

CHURCH OF THE AMBROSIO



THE AMBROSIO

CHURCH OF THE AMBROSIO

CHURCH OF THE AMBROSIO



T O

Mr. RICHARD BAXTER,

Health, Peace, and a Sound Mind.

SIR,

I Perceive you take it for granted (without any particular enquiring from my self about it) that I wrote those *just* and *weighty* exceptions, which were lately published against your (Pretended and Palliated) *Cure of Church Divisions*; and notwithstanding any necessary *Sharpness* which I was forced to use in that seasonable *Antidote*, yet I find you still are pleased to call me *Brother*, which is a Civility I should have thanked you for, had the rest of your stile been answerable to the mildness of that expression; but since you take that *Unbecoming liberty*, as to *revile* when you should *repent*, and instead of *Confessing* and *Forsaking* your *Errors*, charge me with crimes, which I bless God I dare not allow in my *Words*, (much less in my *Writings* which are more deliberate.) This makes me suspect that your Pretence of *Friendship*, and allowing me the title of *Brother*, was only done with the same design, that *Joab* had when he thus saluted *Amaza*, to make the *Sword in your right Hand* to be the less observed, and my wound thereby the more deadly and unavoidable; so that till my *Truth* and *Innocence* be cleared, and your *Repentance* (for wronging me in both) manifested, it will be a Favour if you look upon me as one, who neither desires, nor (if you believe what your self hath writ) *Deserves*, any such expressions of your familiarity.

To shew how much you are for the *Middle-way* (that is in other words, neither to be *Hot*, nor *Cold*, or neither to be altogether for *Truth* nor altogether for *Error*, but to hang *Laodicea* like, in a *Lukewarm* and *Neutral indifference* between both) you have taken pains to find out a *Middle name*, between a *Mistake* and a *Lye*, which you wittily call an *untruth*; and this you are pleased to charge upon me, as a very soft word, and one that I would not be offended with: But Sir, this frothy complement might have been spared, for I hope you are not to learn that *every untruth is a lye* (Job 1. 62. 2. 21) and you needed not have been so scrupulous of speaking your thoughts in Scripture language; but this I ought not to wonder at, since you are not afraid to dethrone the *Scripture* from being a *Perfect Rule*, (a) and therefore would manifest by this *Invention*, that you thought it not sufficient to teach us the right way of speaking; and so was not a *Perfect Rule* of good manners.

(a) Part 1.
p. 99, 100.
401.

But leaving your *Phrase*, I rather chuse to speak unto the *Thing* you mean by it, and whether I have been so guilty as to wrong you, either by a *Mistake*, or a *Lye*, or an *Untruth*; or whatsoever fine word else you please to use, remains now to be examined, in this brief review and defence of some of the principal *Exceptions*, that I have already urged against you, upon the clearing of which, the whole cause, that is in controversy between us, will depend.

My first *Exception* was, That the whole design of your Book was to make your Brethren (that have not your latitude, and cannot reach the subtilty of your Distinctions) *Odious*: This you tell me, is a *Fundamental Untruth*, which animates all the rest, for it was not your Design at all: Truly Sir, I am so unwilling to charge either you, or any else, with more than I have grounds to think is justly your due, that I would gladly take your word in this matter, and so pass it over; but I hope you will pardon me if I cannot; because, First, Many hundreds of sober, impartial, and unbiassed persons, have carefully read your Book, as well as my self, and they all make the same judgment of it; and I think in reason, that is to be esteemed the design of a Book, whatever was the secret and unknown intention of the *Writer*, which, the words

words themselves, and the manner of writing (without any
 streining) do offer unto every serious and inquisitive Reader:
Secondly, This use hath already been made of your Book,
 to render such as cannot Conform much more criminal
 then before, in that your Name and Credit is urged against
 them; and this not only in discourse by many, but by a
 late Author in Print, who quotes your Book to justify his
 Treatise against Toleration. Thirdly, in your very next
 Paragraph, (and likewise elsewhere in this last Book) (b) *(b) Pag. 2.*
 You call Separation a crying sin, *may not cry by sin*; and you
 scruple not to insinuate that all the judgments, which in
 this Nation we do either feel or fear, *will be charged up*
on separation as the principal procuring cause. Pray therefore con-
 sider this, and then tell me, what can make your Brethren
 more Odious, and more expose them to the peoples fury,
 and to the Rulers Revenge, then thus to make them the Cause
 of the Nations Calamity? *It is separating from the*
publick Forms of Worship (which we therefore account false;
 because God hath not commanded them) *our sin is so great,*
 that the place where we live cannot be held Innocent; but
 must suffer from the Hand of God for our sakes; we are
 certainly a people who deserve to be hated of all, and the
 Consequences, Imprisonments, and Deaths, which some of us
 have already felt (and possibly may yet remain in greater
 extremity to be our portion) are no longer to be bewailed
 and grieved for as Persecutions of the Innocent, but rather
 to be rejoiced and gloried in, as due punishments of *Noxious*
Offenders; so that either you must retract and blot such
 passages out of your Book (and thereby testify your Re-
 pentance of them) or we are confident both God and the
 World will justify us, if we still retain our Opinion of
 the ill meant and unworthy design of your Book a-
 gainst us. *(c) Par. 2.*

Your next attempt is to free your self from being looked
 upon as an Earnest and Active Instrument in the late War;
 I mean (since you press me to speak plainly) in the Parlia-
 ment's War against the King: I said, *It became not you to men-*
tion with so much Bitterness what was then done, because you
were as guilty of stirring up and fomenting that war, as
any one what so ever. This you absolutely deny, and boast
 much

(b) Pag. 2.
 P. 7. part
 1. P. 60.
 61.

(c) Par. 2.
 P. 10, 11.
 P. 1. P. 261.

much of your Loyalty, and seem to be greatly offended that such a thing should be charged upon you, and I am again reproached with *Untruth* for it: Sir, I am not willing to take up former matters, nor do I at all delight to expose you unto the scorn of your enemies, and to the pity of your friends; but I cannot help it; you have confidently made the challenge, and will not be beholding to an act of *Indemnity*, but stand upon your *Innocence*, and therefore you must endure what follows. I must confess your bold and resolute disclaiming any *Activity* in that war, did so much stagger me, that I began to question the truth of all the Reports that I had heard; but your own books (which I have since read) do so fully prove my charge, that nothing but your hopes that all is forgotten as well as *pardoned*, which is past, could ever embolden you to so peremptory denial? What Sir, were not you as *active* in that War, as any? when, in your *Holy Commonwealth* (as you tell us, That, when you engaged in the *Parliamentary* war against the King, You thought it the greatest outward service that ever you performed to God; And, That you encouraged many thousands to it: And, that, Though many things fell out otherwise than you expected, yet you were so far from repenting of what you had done, that did the same circumstances occur, you would do it again, or else you should be guilty of Treason or Disloyalty against the Sovereign power of the Land, and of perfidiousness to the Commonwealth, &c.

(d) p. 486.

Can you read Sir these passages, and still deny, that with your utmost industry you did promote the War? or can you think you dealt uprightly in blaming those, who did much less than you, though they have since suffered more? and because you declaim so much against the changes which followed upon the War, and ask me, (who had nothing at all to do with it) many malicious and ensnaring questions about them: This I must tell you doth as little become you as the other; for how can you, with any appearance of integrity, reproach others for *Changing* the Government, when, (in your writings) you do highly approve of that, which was the worst part of the Change, the setting up of *Charles* to be *Protestant*? What is this else but to cry our loudly

loudly against the Treason, and yet to hagg and to embrace the Traynour? For you greatly commend that absurd tool, *The Humble Petition and Advice*, (which was *Cromwell's* instrument of Government) And you say of it (c) *A more excellent Law hath not been made for the happiness of England, concerning Parliaments, at least since the Reformation.* And of *Cromwell* himself (though he dyed in his sinful usurpation, without manifesting any Repentance) you give this Saint-like Character, in your *Preface to the Army*, *The late Protector did prudently, Piously, faithfully (to his immortal honour, how ill soever you used him) exercise the Government.* Sir, could you say all this of him then, and doe you think your most partial friends can justify you now, when you compare him to the Tyrant *Maximus*, and make him in effect to be nothing else but a *Murderous* and a *Bloody Usurper*? which although it may (in the mouth of another who never flattered him) be perhaps received as his *True Character*, yet it became not you (who had so officiously before brought your *Odeurs* to embalm his memory) thus to bespatter and disgrace him.

As for your *Flattery*, to his Son, which I also charged you with, and you (with a strange, but not to your self unusual, boldness) do deny, what can be more apparent? In your *Disputations about Church Government*.

You thus address your self to him, *I observe that the Nation generally rejoiceth in your peaceable entrance upon the Government, and many are perswaded you have been kept from blood in our late warrs, that God might make you a healer of our breaches, and employ you in the Temple-work, which David himself, though he earnestly desired it, might not be honoured with:* And then you advise him to cherish Union among his own Pastors; for *This, say you, would be the way to lift him up highest in the esteem and love of all his people, and make them see, that he was appointed of God to be a Healer and a Restorer, and to glory in him, and to bless God for him, as the instrument of our chiefest peace;* you also tell him in the Dedication of your *Key to Catholicks*, that you are one who bless God for him, and who rejoyce in the present happiness of England, and concurre with the common hopes of yet greater Blessings under his Government, which there you

(c) Holy
Common-
wealth, p. 257, 258.

(f) pag.
374. last
book part
2. pag.
140, 141.

you pray for, and to subscribe yourself his Faithful Sub-
ject.

Now Sir, if you please, find our *Middle word* between
Falshood and Flattery, and think to excuse your self by that,
while I take leave to say, that such kind of Language, (to
one who in no sense could be accounted a *lawfull Governour*)
doth too rankly savour of both: Go if you please, and boatt
your self of your present Loyalty, and seem to take it ill
as you pretend to do; [c] If any think otherwise of you, but

[g] Part 1. Will remember, that even you who now (in that respect) so
pag. 26, 27 much boast, and exalt your self above your Brethren, jeli-
[b] Cure ting them, that [b] God in justice hath put them down) did
pag. 257. also say (when you thought you might do it safely) That
Common-wealth p. you were satisfied in two things. First, That [i] God in Ju-
483, 484. stice had put down the former Governours (meaning the King
and his Party) for their Persecution and scorning of Piety. Se-
condly, That you thought your self bound to submit unto the
present Government (which was then in the hands of Rich.
Cromwell) as set over us by God, and that you would obey
for conscience sake, and behave your self as a Loyal Subject
towards them. Sir, you that professed your self to be so
Loyal then, cannot in reason be supposed to be conscienci-
ously Loyal now, and the least you can expect, is neither to
be believed nor trusted.

I have done, Sir, with my Defence of this Exception, and
now if you please, charge me with Untruth; for affirming,
You were as active as any, in the late War; and deny if you
can, the consequences gathered from thence; that, It be-
came not you to blame the effects; who gave such Rise and En-
couragement to the Cause: I mean, unless you repent of the
Cause; which it is evident, you have not yet done; and if I
may not be believed in this Opinion of you, I doubt not but
the Bishop of Worcester will, who for this very thing did for-
merly accuse you of Rebellion. From which charge, he
thar defended you then, leaves you to acquit your self now
as well as you can. And now, Sir, for a close of this, I should
ask your pardon, for thus venturing to break the Act of Ob-
lision; but your Importunity did force me to it; and I could
not otherwise clear my self from your slanderous Imputati-
on of Falshood, but by bringing Truth to light, and by strip-
ping

& Bish. of
Worc. l.
Letter.
I Animad
versions
on Bishop
of Worc.
Letter.

ping you of your Disguise (under which, for so many years you have been masked and covered) leave you naked and defenceless to the judgement and censure of every Impartial and Unprejudiced Reader; and if any thing is written here, which you will be ashamed to read, and afraid to give an answer to, pray thank your self, who would not be quiet, nor let your Brethren alone, till you were thus brought forth to an open Discovery.

Your mentioning, with so much scorn, the Doctrine of the Temporal Reign of Christ, which you, in derision, call the (b) Fifth-Monarchy-way, and your endeavouring to expose all that you think savour that Opinion, (and in particular Mr. Brown) is another Evidence, that you dare not look any Truth in the face, which brings present danger with it; no, though formerly you were as earnest, and open an Asserter of it, as any: For not many years ago you told us, that (c) you were perfectly Neutral, as to the point of Christs Visible and Personal Reign upon Earth, and you did not know which way your Judgement did most incline; But the Theocrotical Policy, or Divine Common-wealth (which is the unquestionable Reign of Christ upon Earth.) This, all Christians are agreed, may justly be sought, and the Temporal dignity of the Saint, which would undoubtedly much bless the World. Sir, I have been very curious to enquire into the Doctrine of the Fifth Monarchy, and most of my Converse is with those that do in Faith expect, and in Patience wait for such a time; and I never knew any of them (however they are mis-represented) carry the Notion farther than you have already done. It will become you therefore to enquire, what is your reall ground, why such, who still retain those Principles which you once laid down, should now be mentioned by you, with so much scorn and slighting: Till you have found out and declared a better Reason, pray give me leave to think this is the Chief; because you dare not own any Hazardous & Persecuted Truth; and you find it far easier (in your Notional Divinity) to recant all that formerly you were convinced of, than to bring your heart unto a willingness for Martyrdom; and this alone, I take likewise to be the true Cause, why so weakly, and so unlike a Minister of the Gospel, you inveigh against [d] Sufferings;

[b] Part
2. p. 55. 59.
4. 110.

[c] Holy
Common-
wealth, p.
221, 222.

[d] Pag.
73. 74. 75.
part. 2.

For you have never yet experienced either the *Comfort* or the *Cleansing* of them; and therefore venture rashly to speak evil of what you know not, and which I fear you have neither Courage nor Integrity enough to venture the Trial of. I speak it to your shame, since the Scripture often recommends Afflictions as the necessary Exercise of our Faith, and the chief matter of our Christian Joy and Triumph.

[e] Part
2 p. 60.
74. 80.

But how ill soever you had used the Living, methinks you should have spared the Dead, and not disturbed the dust of my Fellow-Prisoner Mr. Powel [e] by reproaching his memory with to abusive and disgraceful a mention of him, as if he were a False Prophet, and acted by a deluding spirit. For you lay to his charge, that many years ago, he prophesied of some things, which we do not yet see fulfilled: But, First, may not a Good man, nay a true Prophet, be sometimes mistaken? Was not Samuel so, when he took Eliab to be the Lords Anointed; was not Nathan deceived, when he encouraged David to build the Temple? and did ever any yet suspect them to be False Prophets for that? Secondly, may not many Prophets truly foretell things to come, and yet those things be a long time suspended and delayed because of the sins of a people? Is not this condition to be understood in most Scripture Prophecies, which we find expressed in Zech. 6 15. *And this shall come to pass, if you will diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God?* This and much more may be said in defence of that diligent and Faithful Servant of the Lord, whom I knew to be truly Religious and Worthy, and therefore thought it my duty to vindicate him from your Unchristian Calumny. And pardon me Sir, if I put you in mind (for you seem to have forgot) how in this the Lord favoured him, in that after much exercise of Affliction, he was taken away in Peace, and Buried in Honour; when I fear such as you will be suffered to outlive your own Fame, and your Memory shall dye before you. For God will resist the proud, and such as exalt themselves shall be Abased and Humbled; Which Prophecy is true, whatever Mr. Powels was.

I am sorry that I am forced to speak thus plainly, but the Pride of your heart, discovered by your Writings, is so apparent, that it cannot but be Known and Read of all men; to

go no farther for instances then your last book ; what needed you have told the World in Print, That *f You chose once an Easter-day to communicate in a very populous Church in London; purposely that it might be the farther known :* Is not this like the Hypocrites, to blow a Trumpet before you, and to do your actions that you may be seen of men ? what other end could you have, in doing that so publickly, then or in declaring it now, but a *vain-glorious Hope*, that doubting and unsatisfied Christians might look upon your Example, as their *Pole-star*, and accordingly direct their motions ? I look upon it also as a strange piece of *Boasting*, when you tell us that men of all judgments have written against you : As to reckon them up in your own words [g] [g] part 1. some *Infidells, divers Quakers, Papists, Antinomians, some* pag. 40. *Arminians, some Anti-Arminians, Anabaptists, Seperatists, Levellers, Discessans, &c.* What Sir, is it possible that men of these several persuasions, which you have expressed, have all written against you, and doth there remain yet a greater number concealed in the gulph of a bottomless &c. ? Is it indeed true, that you offend all, and please none ? and can you glory that you are counted the *Ismael of the Age* ? Pray Sir remember what became of him ; He was cast out of *Abrahams house*, that is, out of the Church of God, for *Scorning*, and when you do a little better consider of it, that thole worthily famous and honoured men Mr. *Rhotorford, Mr. Burges, Mr. Blake, Mr. Crandon* (besides some living of equal repute for learning and piety) have all written against you, and solemnly warned others to beware of your books (as containing much *leaven of false and dangerous Doctrine* in them) did I say, You seriously consider this, you would be grieved for grieving them, and not put it in among your *Triumphs*, that you had provoked so many able and Worthy Pens to oppose and antidote the infection of your Writings : To conclude this Point (for it is a sore place, and I would not handle it so roughly, but in order to healing) when I said in one of my exceptions, that *I feared you were not sound in the Doctrine of Justification by Faith alone, without works* ; instead of answering directly and satisfying my scruple (which you might have done in few words) you refer me to *Five (h) or more Treatises*, [h] part 2. which p. 127.

[i] part 2.
p. 18.

which you say you have written upon that Subject : and in another place [i] you tell me that you have written the better part of above Fifty Books against the Profane, the Jews, and the Mahumedans. (I will not enquire to what purpose, for I am very confident none of those did ever read what you have written against them.) But adde to these your several other Treatises, as about Baptism, Confirmation, Church Government, Commonwealth, &c. Your Books will in all amount to as many Volumes as Tostatus writ, concerning whom, (and all such kind of Writers) you once gave this true Character, (though since you have most unhappily forgotten it,) (k) *I cannot but account all those Tostatus's impudently proud, who think the world should read no Bodies Works but theirs.* Pray Sir, read this passage again, and compare it with what you have already writ, (and what as I hear you do yet farther intend to write;) and then tell me in earnest what you think of your self; for here, according to your own Words, [l] *Evidence must decide the Case.*

[k] Pre-
monition
to the
Saints rest

[l] part 2.
pag. 25.

[m] part 2.
pag. 91.

I think Sir, I may say to you with every whit as much truth and candour, what you dis-ingeniously reply upon me, [m] *I have no mind to make you odious, nor to open your sin to others; but you have opened it to the world, and I must open it to you, if possibly you may repent: and therefore having said this to your self, (that by setting before you some few of your many failings, you might be Humbled, and come to a more sober understanding of your self and way.)* I come now to speak something, and that very briefly, to the Question about Conformity, which hath occasioned all this heat betwixt us: and in the handling of this, I think I may also say, as you sometimes did [n] *I approve not Tautologies, nor a tedious stile, nor the heaping up of useless matter and words;* which Rule in writing, though you forget to observe, yet I shall keep close to; for Truth needs not many words to defend it.

[n] Pre-
monition
to the
Saints rest.

In the stating of this Question, you do your self grant so much, that you scarce leave any thing, to be either disputed or denied by those whom you pretend with so much vehemency to oppose; For,

First, you grant [o] that we are not to have Communion p. 8. 9, & with a Diocesan Church, as such, and that we are not to
74. 75. own

own *Diocesan Bishops*.

Secondly, You allow that *we are not to have Communion with Persecutors, nor with such as have consented to our Silencing,*

Thirdly, You affirm that *we are not to communicate with Parish Churches only*, nor with all of them, and particularly, *not with such whose Pastours are, through insufficiency, Heresie, and Impiety, Intolerable.* And this you tell us, was your own Practice, For, you say (p) *you resolved, if you lived where was an intollerable Minister, you would not bear him, nor come near him; so as to encourage him in his undertaking of that Sacred Office.*

[p] part 1.
p. 36.

All this, and more of this nature (which you assert) being granted, I scarce see what it is that you contend for; or so earnestly declaim against; since from these Grounds *Separation* at this day may easily be justified: For,

First, every *Parish Church* is a Part of the *Diocesan*; and if a *Diocesan Church, as such*, is not to be communicated with, then a *Parish Church, as such*, is to be seperated from; since there is the same Reason of the *Parts* as of the *Whole*: And you must find out a new Logick, before you can prove, that if the *Whole* be Corrupt, any of the *Parts* are clean and fit for our Communion.

Secondly, a *Parish Minister* is (in that station and office) but a Servant of the *Diocesan Bishop*, and therefore rightly called a *Curate*, and if we may not own, (as you grant) the *Bishop*, I think it will necessarily follow that his *Substitute* and *Curate* hath no reason to expect any Respect from us. We doe not use, in other cases, to Regard the *Man*, when we think it a duty to despise the *Master*.

Thirdly, If *Persecutors* are not to be communicated with, *nor such as have consented to our Silencing*, which you also allow, (though I could wish you had proved it better then by the obscure and disputable Example of *Martin*) [q] then I think very few, if any of the *Parish Ministers*, but must even upon this account also be seperated from; since either by *Open Consent*, or else by an *Undoing* and *Pernicious silence*, they have all made themselves guilty of that grievous sin: There being but little difference

[q] part 1.
p. 763

in the sight of God, between the *persecuting of Brethren* our selves; and (by not *sharply reprov*ing it,) seeming to approve of it in others.

Lastly, admitting there are some Worthy and able men among the *Parish Ministers* (which for my own part, I believe never a whit the more because you affirm it,) yet this we must say, that their sin is great in submitting to so undue a way of entering into the *Ministry*; and therefore we both forbear our selves, and warn all others not to *bear* them, because we cannot think our Lord *Christ* ever sent such to Preach in his Name, who directly and by a solemn Oath have Renounced their *Christian liberty*, under pretence of Preaching *Christ*; and are indeed nothing else (as to the whole discharge and exercise of their Office) but *Servants of men*, which we have already fully learned from the Apostles, is altogether inconsistent with being *Servants of Christ*, *Galatians* 1. 10. 1 *Corin.* 7. 23. and therefore as such we cannot own them.

[r] part 1.
p. 78.

For the question is not (as you weakly and insignificantly word it) *Whither[r] a Defective, Faulty, True Church may ordinarily (or at least sometimes be joyned with; but whither a defective faulty imposing Church is not to be separated from; This we affirm; Because, First, we know not how else to preserve our Christian Liberty (which it is an indispenfible duty to maintain) but by seperating from those who would unduly take it from us: Secondly, Being present where those things are used in the Worship of God, which God hath not commanded, This would involve us in the guilt and contagion of them; nor doe we believe (however we have your Word for the contrary) the Lord will otherwise interpret it, since he hath so strictly charged us, To keep far from a false matter; and not to partake in other mens sins: Lastly, whatever pretences may be used (as it is ealie to write Declamations) for the keeping of Peace, yet (to speak strictly and so as to satisfie conscience) Peace is but ill bought, if we must purchase it at so dear a rate, as with the loss of Truth: And this Truth concerning the sole Sovereign power of our Lord Christ in appointing all matters of his Worship (He being the Lord of his House, and Faithful in all things as Moses, Heb. 5.)*
this

this is a point so necessary to be maintained, and so utterly inconsistent with the supposing that any thing is to be *Obruded*, which he hath not *Commanded*, that we dare not allow our selves in the practise of any thing, which may prejudice that *Fundamental*: And we judge we have sufficient warrant from what the Apostles did in a like case, *Acts* 15. 24. For if they reprov'd such as Preach'd up *Circumcision*, and other *Legall Ceremonies*, at that day, when as the Apostles had given them *no such Commandment*; saying of them, that they *subverted* (or *spoiled*) the souls of the *Disciples*; then may we affirm the like of those now, who, in things equally indefensible doe act with every whit as little authority, from whom upon that very account, we think it our duty to separate.

I am not ignorant that you (after many others, who have formerly much better pleaded this cause) do insist upon two Arguments by which you labour to defend your irregular way of Communion.

The first is, that *in the Primitive Churches there were many Corruptions, which the Apostle writes against, but doth not advise any, because of them, to separate*: But I answer, that in this *Instance* (as well as in your *State*, you do wholly (I will not say ignorantly) mistake the *Question*: For it is not *Corruption* or *Errour*, barely considered as such, that we account to be a sufficient ground of *Separation*; but the imposing of that error with an high hand, and making a submission to it (at least in our practise and outward observance) the very condition of Communion, this, we say, is a thing which necessitates us to make a *Separation*, and that for the Reasons I have already urged; To which I will adde only this, that, however the presenting our Bodies at a *Worship* which we doe not inwardly approve of, may render us excusable and justifie us among men, yet we are sure it will not in the sight of *God*; who hates *hypocrisie* in his *service*, and values every offering by the heart of him that brings it.

I might content my self with urging thus much, but because the *Corruptions* that were in the first Churches, are often pleaded in this Case, I will therefore examine the argument drawn from them a little farther, and *First*, this is.

is clear in Scripture, that our Lord Christ (who was himself *Holy and separated from sinners*) did never Call nor design his Church to be an impure mixt body of *Holy and Unholy*, without any distinction blended and huddled up together; but we have it frequently mentioned in Scripture, that he called his people out of the world, to be an *Holy separte people; an habitation, and house for himself by his spirit to dwell in*; with many expressions to the same purpose, whereupon every one who names the Name of Christ, is solemnly commanded to *depart from all unrighteousness*. Secondly, though through the Corruption of men, and negligence of Church Officers (for which they are blamed Rev. 2. 14. 20.) many Ungodly Prophane Formalists and Hypocrites, did (and daily doe) creep in, yet there is a strict command given to *put such out of the Church* 1 Cor. 5. 2 Thes. 3. Rev. 2. And all are commanded to *turn aside from them*, 2 Tim. 3. 5. Rom. 16. 17. which commands do strongly and convincingly imply, that if such are to be *with drawn from*, then if any Church who is admonished concerning them, shall still maintain, set and countenance such; that Church also is thereby *defiled*, and become unfit to be communicated with: For *a little leaven leavens a whole lump*, 2 Cor. 5. 7, and *one sinner destroyes much good*, Eccl. 9. 18. and *many are defiled by the contagion of one*, Heb. 12. 15. All which places show, that a Church, which after admonition and discovery of Offenders, will not use her authority in casting them out, doth *partake of their sins*, and becomes as guilty as they, and therein as unworthy of Communion. Lastly, which will fully answer the scruple, it is to be considered, that the *Primitive Churches* were settled by the Apostles, and constituted according to the *divine pattern*, having all the *Ordinances of Christ*, and true Officers, rightly established amongst them; so that though many scandalous sins did break out, and were visible among some of the Members, yet a power was still retained in each Church for the keeping themselves *pure*, by casting out Offenders; whereby they were kept to the *Institution and Orders of Christ*, without any universal Innovation or degenerating in those *Essentials of Order* as well as *Doctrine*, which they fell into in the ages after; and when

Anti-

Anti-Christianism (which was then *working*) did manifestly shew it self not only in rejecting the Truth, & *Thes.* 2. but in imposing error, *Rev.* 13. 16. 17. then was *Separation* necessary to be made; which is implied in *measuring*, (as it were *circumscribing* and *enclosing*) the *Altar-Worshippers*, and casting out the others. *Rev.* 11. 1. 2, and likewise in the *sealed ones* that had a mark upon their *Foreheads*; whereby is meant some outward note of distinction from *Anti-Christ's* Followers, *Rev.* 7. 1. 2. and 14. 1. This necessity of *Separation* which began then, continues still; since our *Churches*, though Reformed from *Popery* (that is, from *Anti-Christianisme*) in some points, yet are not restored unto the *Primitive pattern and purity*: so that more may be said for *separation* now (when whole *Churches* are out of Order and Corrupt) then could be at that time, when Corruption had infected only some particular members, for it is not, as I said before, *Corruption* barely, no nor *Imposition* barely, that is a sufficient ground for any to separate (for where some lesser *errors* are held but not imposed, or where only *Necessary things* are imposed, we shall not forbear Communion) but when *Error* is once imposed, and by a strong hand forcibly maintained, (notwithstanding all admonitions and endeavours of Reformation) here we must *separate* or consent to sin, which is our present case; and till you draw your Parallel exact, and suit it in all respects to what it was before, your instances, from the practice of former times, are but impertinent and unconcluding.

The second Argument that you do with much vehemency press, is the example of the Former *Non-Conformists*, who you say were all against separation, and why should we be wiser then they? To which I answer in Learned and Judicious Mr. *Hildersham's* words, and the rather because I find you quote his Name in favour of your opinion.

First, It hath been an old trick of Hypocrites to pretend great Reverence and respect to the Servants of God that are dead, when their credit might serve to the disgrace of Gods servants that now live and are their Teachers: so did the Jews speak gloriously of *Moses* and the

Lecture
59 on
John 4.

Prophets, Mat. 23. 29. Whereas on the other side, the Faithful are described by this Note, They embrace and are established in the present Truth, 2 Pet. 1. 12. that is in the truth that is now taught them.

Secondly, admit that the Servants of God, whose judgement and practice these men do seem to stand so much upon, had been never so Learned and Godly men, yet we may not build our Conscience upon the credit of any man, neither of them that have taught us heretofore, nor of them that teach us now, but only upon the Word of God: If any (though far, inferiour to them in Piety and Learning) shall bring you the word of God, the manifest word of God, against such or such an abuse? and you say you will not receive it, because such a Learned and good man was of another mind, you sin in an high degree against God, for you oppose the credit of man to the Authority of Gods word, In this case, we must remember what the Apostle saith. *Gal. 1. 8, 9.*

Thirdly, we are not to rest in the judgement and practice of those good men that have lived before us; for as it is with the particular members of the Church, so it is with the whole Church, it must grow and encrease in grace and knowledge. Though *Asa* was a good King, and Reformed much in his first days, yet *Jehosaphat* Reformed more, 2 *Chron. 17. 6.* and *Josiah* went further, then either *Jehosaphat* or any other that had been before him, 2 *Kings 23. 25.*

And whereas you mention the *Holiness* and *Learning* of those *Non-Conformists*, thereby to deter us from going beyond their *Line & Measure*, I may reply, in that same worthy Authors words -- 'Though they were Holy and Learned Men, yet it may well be, that the Lord hath revealed that to his servants now, which they saw not, for the Lord hath oft done so; *David* had more understanding than his Teachers had, *Psal. 119. 99.* and the *Disciples of Christ*, saw many truths, which many of the Prophets (though they were it may be holier then they) did not see, *Luke 10. 24.* Many points of Gods Truth are revealed now even to *Babes*, what the *Patriarchs* and *Prophets*, (though Holy

'Holy Men and highly in Gods favour) saw not : He adviseth therefore, rest not so much on the Judgment, advice, and example of the best men, but examine them by the Scriptures, for good men have oft proved Satans instruments to deceive others, as *Peters* example misled *Barnabas*, *Gal. 2. 12. 14.* Thus far, and much more to the same purpose saith that excellent Author, (whose words because I thought they might be of weight to you,) I chose to transcribe at large, rather then to say the same things in other words of mine own.

To the same purpose Mr. *Gee*, when he was urged with the authority of *Calvin*, *Bucer*, *Parent*, &c. who all give an other interpretation then that which he follows in his exposition of *Rom. 13.* Replies thus, ----- 'The opinion or averment of man, (even of the best for Learning and Piety,) 'in a Case of Conscience, or in the enquiry, what is the 'sense of such and such a Scripture, or such a Divine Precept is not an Oracle neither, will it pass for such in any 'controversie. The truth is we are very prone to attribute some authority to it, and to urge it upon others, so far as we find it concurrent with our own perswasions, but 'who is he that will be prejudged or concluded by it, contrary to the opinion that he hath received, or in what he 'is otherwise doubtful ? The words of that Learned Man may be applyed to the present Case, for Sir, you know how much you have departed from the Doctrine of those Famous *Non-Conformists* in many the most material points of Religion, and therefore cannot justly be allowed ; in this, to make use of their Authority : It will I suppose be easily granted that it is a very improper thing for any to seem to magnifie so much the Opinion of those worthy men (as to press it now upon their *Brethren*) in the business of *Ceremonies* and *Conformity*, when they themselves refuse to follow them in their other more sound and substantial Doctrines.

To give you a few Instances, First, The former *Nonconformists* held *Armenianisme* (that is, the Doctrines of *Free-will in the things of God*, of *Universal Grace*, and *Universal Redemption*) to be so Fundamental and dangerous an Error ;

a Part 1.
p. 6, 7.

Preface to
the 5 Dis-
putations.

b part 1.
p. 100.
Part 2. p.
35.

that they have called it a *Beelzebub-Error*, and *Another Gospel*. But you do not only speak favourably of it; but also proudly tell us, that of you are very confident, [a] not one of many hundreds, who speak against Communion with Arminians, do understand what *Arminianisme* is; As if the difference were either so small, that it was not worth the while to oppose it, or else so abstruse and difficult, that plain Christians could not easily come to know it. Truly Sir, I acknowledge my self the meanest of my brethren, and yet I think, who understands the necessity of being born again, and renewed by the Spirit of God, must needs understand his own Free will hath not the least power to receive the things of God, and whoever doth this, knows very well what *Arminianisme* is, though perhaps he may be ignorant of the Name, which is not at all material in the Controversie: and indeed I wonder you can so confidently plead for Communion with *Arminians*; and that with an &c. too; when you formerly told us, That, in the points of *Predestination, Redemption, Free-will, Effectual grace, Perseverance, and Assurance of Salvation*; the *Jesuites* and *Arminians* do teach the same Doctrine. Sir, I hope you do not intend to enlarge your *Communion* so far, as to take in the *Jesuites* also; if you do, pray deal clearly with us, and tell us so, and do not delude us with an unlimited and unintelligible *etcetera*.

Secondly, The former *Nonconformists* did so fully hold that the Scripture was to be believed upon it's own authority and Testimony, that they all unanimously affirm, *It is a dangerous thing not to rest in the authority of Scripture; not so count it, Arminians*. But you, *Jesuite-like*, for I am sorry I cannot give it a milder term, are not afraid to say, *The Scripture tells us not sufficiently and particularly which Books in it self are Canonical, nor what various Readings are the right, nor whether every Text be brought to us incorrupted*: So that in effect, you do resolve the credit of the Holy Scripture, into the Truth of *Church-History*; which words are so contrary to the true Protestant Doctrine; so derogatory from the Self-evidencing Light, and Divine Authority of the Word of God contained in the Scripture; and so fully agreeing with the Doctrine of the *Jesuites* in this Point, that all which you have writ (pretendedly for the Defence of the Scrip-

Scripture, when indeed you betray it) is not able to make any tolerable satisfaction.

What need I mention more, as that the Former Nonconformists thought there was no possibility of Salvation for the Papists, no more than for a Samaritan, or an Idolater: but you tell us, that a you confesse you affect not the Honour of that *Orthodoxousness*. And in one of your Books, if I am not mistaken in my Collections, you seem to affirm, at least strongly imply, that a man may be saved in any Religion, that lives morally, though he knows not Christ; which is, as Mr. Hilderham calls it, a damnable conceit; since it renders the whole mystery of Salvation by Christ alone, vain and ineffectual. Add to this, the Former Conformists said, The filth of Nature cannot be sufficiently spoken of; nay, no Angel can sufficiently point out the mystery of sin, and filthiness of nature. But you advise us, to take heed, least in speaking against the corruption of Nature, we run into Excess: which are the very words in English, of *Andradius* the Jesuite in Latine, to whom the learned *Cheremiti* answers, as I do to you; that whosoever thinks slightly of the filth of Natural corruption, must needs over-value himself, and undervalue the Grace of Christ.

I shall conclude with mentioning one thing more; I affirmed, that by *Flesh* you had told us was only meant the sensitive Appetite; this you reply, is an untruth, and a meer fiction, b for you never said so. Sir you had need have a good memory; for you have writ many Books, in which, as containing many words, there cannot want much sin and vanity; and indeed had you meditated strictly upon a quarter of what you have writ, you could not be guilty of so strange forgetfulness: for in your *Premônition to the Saints Rest*, you have these very words, *Many think that by Flesh is meant only In-dwelling sin; when, alas! it is the sensitive Appetite, that it chargeth us to subdue*; for which you quote *Rom. 8. 3, 4, 5.* which of all the places, where the word *Flesh* is named, doth least favour your conceit: and indeed sir, that I may confess a secret you, this very Passage of yours, I looked upon as so conceited and singular, and many years ago it gave me so great offence, that I threw away your Book upon it, and never would read it over; 'as nor think-

a Part 2.
p. 38.

thinking it possible that one, who erred in the very entrance, in so plain a Truth, was able to instruct me in any thing that was worth my knowing. I believe many will think I concluded too rashly and hastily; but I am much confirmed in that judgement of your Book, since a Person yet living, and one worthy of credit, acquainted me, that when the learned and judicious Mr. Herle had read that cried up Book of yours, he told him, *It had been happy for the Church of God if your friends had never sent you to School.* Mr. Cawdrey had the same opinion of it, and another person, as knowing in the mystery of Godliness as either of them, told a friend of mine, that *notwithstanding the noise about you, you would end in flesh and blood: which Prophecie, if you go on to write as you have done, will certainly be fulfilled.*

I know Sir, you have very angrily promised me (as the Bishop of Worcester did you) that *you will make no reply* [a] But you are so apt to forget your self in greater matters, and have such an itch to be in print, that I will not take your word: and therefore when you write next (for I presume you cannot be silent) I intreat only two things from you; First, that you will be *short*, for I am quite tired out with your tedious *multitude of words*, and then, that you will be *significant*: I mean

First, That you will not mistake the thing you write about, but labour clearly to understand the question. Do not ramble, and talk of *Nature*, as it is *Pure*, when you should write about *Nature corrupted*. Do not discourse about *Free-will at large*, [b] when you should only handle *Free will in the things of God*: and because many Professors of Christianity are *Ignorant* and *Injudicious*, do not think that therefore you do well to call *Christians*, considered as *Christians* so. These are evident and apparent *Sophismes*, which abound in your last Treatise, and do discover that your *Logick* is every wheras ungrounded as your *Divinity*.

Secondly, Pray take a little pains to expresse your sence in plain and intelligible Language; and do not love to jumble absurd and insignificant Phrases together, as to say, (c) *A defective, faulty, true Church*: To mention (d) *A Political, Spiritual, Constitutive Head*. And do not think to excuse your self from writing of Nonsense, by saying *you meant*

a Part. 2d.
p. 145.

b Part. 2d.
p. 133.

c Part. 1.
pag. 78.

d Part 1.
pag. 8.

a thing [d] Objectively and not Subjectively I And do not make Philosophy Ridiculous, as you do when you tell us [e] That our acts of knowing exterior things are, as Philosophers affirm, objectively organieal, though not efficiently and formally. Sir I am sure no wise man talks thus, and if Philosophers do, it is time we left them, for they do not speak according to the common sense and reason of mankind, and it must be merely their obscurity that makes them considerable.

[d] Part
1. p. 36.
[e] part 1.
p. 52.

Lastly, when truth is to be examined, and the Nature of a thing strictly to be considered, doe not argue against it, because of some ill consequences, which you fancy will follow: This is a common practice of Papists, Socinians, and your beloved Friends the Arminians, whose steps you tread in, and therefore may justly be suspected to own their doctrines, and this ill temper you have discovered, as in other things, so in particular in what you desperately urge against the Scriptures being [f] a Perfect Rule; which Foundation of Faith and Practice you labour to overthrow, by Tragically insisting upon the consequences that will follow, which is just to as much purpose, as if I should deny the Revelation of God, concerning Himself, his Son, his Decrees, &c. because I understand them not, and cannot reconcile them to that which I call reason; Sir, This in the end will be found perfect Folly and Madness, and therefore pray leave it in time, least the Lord reprove you, and you be found a Liar.

[f] part 1.
p. 99, 100.

I have now done, and you may see Sir, by this brief taste, how easie it is for me to defend my self throughout my whole Antidote, but I do not see it will be worth my while; for it is not a lessning of your Reputation, that I mainly aim at; much less at the advancing of mine own upon the ruine of yours; but I thought the Truth of Christ was worth my vindicating: And when I saw that your Name did stand in the way of it, and that your Suffering-Brethren had their Burthen made heavier, in that your hand helped to lay it on, I thought it my duty to reprove you, and to set your sin (and error herein) in order before you: And if (after all this admonition) you will still go on, and under pretence of Writing for Love, doe what you

can

can to keep up a *mixed, disorderly, persecuting, and Impure Church State*, leaving us no hope nor possibility of *Reformation* (unless it shall please God by some sudden and unexpected miracle to convert the whole Nation ~~at~~ once.) I must then look upon you as one of our greatest *dividers* and so much the more dangerous, as your pretensions outwardly are the more fair and plausible. The whole design therefore of this Letter, is, (as to others) to persuade all to look upon you, not only as a *Fallible*, but as a *Mistaken* man, whose Name and Authority is not fit to be urged when the appeal is made to Scripture: and likewise (as to your self) my end is, to do what I can to recover you unto the *Right Primitive Spirit of Christianity* (if indeed you have as yet received it) or at least to presse you to be looking after it; and then I am your self will (with us) contend earnestly for the *Faith*, and strive for *Purity of Communion*, as the only way to settled *Peace*. You will then make a vast difference between *Unavoidable Imperfections* (which attend us even in your best and most commanded Duties) and *unwarrantable* (because impos'd) *Corruption*, which is all at present that we *separate* from; and however our *Rulers* may deal with us for this (who think their *Laws* are to be obeyed) yet we could not but let you know, that from you we deserved better usage; since you are in the same *condemnation*, and as much break the present *Laws* in some things, as we do in others. There is therefore one thing that I will confess my Error in; it was my miscalling you *Learned, Judicious, and Mortified Mr. Baxter*. Sir pray pardon me this, for it is a great *untruth*, indeed the only one (though you take no notice of it) which you can justly charge me with; I will promise not to offend in the like kind again, but yet remain,

Turtle-street. *and* *Ready to serve you in all first month, or March, 26, 1671.* *Christian Offices* of *Love*.

Edw. Bagshaw

A POSTSCRIPT.

S I R,

Since the finishing of my Letter to you, I received the two following Papers, the one written by Mrs. --- of *Worcester*, the other from my Brother *Brown*, whom you unhandſomly and untruly reflect upon in your laſt Treatiſe; I intreat you to read what they ſay in defence of themſelves, which I have taken liberty without their knowledge to ſend to you, that whatever you doe to me, yet to them you might not deny this juſt ſatisfaction, of making a *Re- cantation* for the unſeemly abuſes you have put upon them -- Your words are theſe,

I intreat you and the Reader to get and read a book Part 2d.
 published by Mr. *Brown*, (as is uncontrouledly affirmed, P.
 who lately wrote againſt Mr. *Tombes* againſt the lawful-
 neſs of Communion in Pariſh Churches) concerning the
 experiences and ſtrange work of God on a Gentlewoman
 in *Worceſter*, whom I will not name, becauſe yet living, and
 God may recover her, but is there well known; This Gen-
 tlewoman having been long vain, and a conſtant negle-
 ct of publick worſhip, was ſuddenly moved to go into
 the Church while I was there Preaching on *Rom. 6. 21.*
 The very Text ſtruck her to the heart; but before the
 Sermon was done ſhe could hardly forbear crying out in
 the Congregation: She went home a changed perſon,
 reſolved for a holy life. But her affection or Paſſion be-
 ing ſtrong, and her Nature *Tender*, and her knowledge
Small, ſhe quickly thought that the Quakers lived ſtrictli-
 er then we, and fell in among them. At laſt perceiving
 them vilifie the Miniſtry and the Scripture, her heart
 ſmote her, and ſhe forſook them, as ſpeaking againſt
 that which by experience ſhe had found to do her good;
 and deſiring to ſpeak with me, who lived aſarr off, open-
 ed thus much to me. But all theſe deep workings and
 troubles between the ſeveral wayes, did ſo affect her, that
 ſhe fell into a very ſtrong melancholy; inſomuch that
 ſhe impoſed ſuch an abſtinence from meat upon her ſelf,
 D that

that she was much consumed, and so debilitated as to keep her bed, and almost famished. Mr. Brown and others were her instructors, who were very zealous for the way called *The Fifth Monarchy*, and having instructed her in those opinions, published the whole story in Print, (which else I would not have mentioned) I shall say nothing of any thing which is otherwise known, but desire the Reader that doth but understand what Melancholy is, better than the Writers did, to read that book, and observe with sorrow and pity, what a number of plain effects of melancholy, as to *thoughts*, and *Scriptures*, and *Actions* are there ascribed to *meer Temptations* on one side, and to *Gods unusual or notable operations* on the other side!

*Some Passages out of Mrs.--- of Worcesters
Letter to a Friend in London.*

Dear Brother,

AS touching Mr. Baxter, I refer you to my Brother Browns Letter unto Mr. Bagshawe, with this intimation, that as it relates to my self, I am perfectly unconcerned; it is a small matter for me to be judged of mans day; yet I cannot but wonder that one of Mr. Baxters Profession should dare to open his mouth against the operations of the Holy Spirit in the Soul, the remembrance of which is still sweet to me, and causeth me to cry out, Oh! how exceeding excellent is thy loving kindness, thou God of grace, what was I poor silly Nothing, polluted dust, that thou shouldst chuse me, bring me to his Foot, give me to find shadow against the scorching beams under Christ, and fill me with joy and peace through believing. And if this be the effect of *Melancholy*; I would tell Mr. Baxter, it is such an effect, as I must magnifie the Grace of the Lord for ever for. And this confirms me, that the Lord comforted and lifted up, my lost, forlorn, cast down, and almost overwhelmed soul, in that usual path, in which he walks, administering comfort to his poor benighted ones, viz. the sealing his love by his spirit in a word of promise, which

which I am sorry Mr. *Baxter* should be found deriding of. But God will vindicate the work he hath wrought, though men pour contempt upon it, unto whom I commit it: but that Brother *Brown* was the Author of that book, that I was suddenly moved to go to hear Mr. *Baxter*, that ought of his Sermon had any impression upon me (which I could not attend to, because I was so terrified with the words of the Text, *Rom. 6. 21.* that I went away resolved upon a holy life (when indeed I came into company, thinking thereby to ease, and deliver my self from the trouble which had seized me; which I mention with self abhorrence and admiration of the rich Grace of God) That Brother *Browne* instructed me in the *Fifth Monarchy Principle* (whereas he then opposed it) That I imposed abstinence upon my self as to meat (when I would gladly have eaten but durst not, because I apprehended I had no right to the Creature, being out of Christ) This is all False and Untrue, and I am astonished that Mr. *Baxter* should with so much confidence affirm these things; The Lord Pardon and Humble him.

Some Passages out of Mr. Brown's Letter.

Dear Brother,

I Have some time since perused Mr. *Baxters* two last Treatises, which (to speak modestly) give great Occasion to the adversaries of Truth and Purity, to reproach and blaspheme God and his People, and have caused great grief of heart to many that truly fear him; and this is no more (for the substance of it) than some of Mr. *Baxters* own Disciples have suggested to me. In his last (Entituled, *A defence of the Principles of Love*) He severely chargeth you, but you need not be over solicitous, for those that know the complexion and temper of the man, who writes thus, will wait to see your defence, before they believe you guilty of so many gross *Untruths*; especially since I can prove Mr. *Baxter* (even while he thus condemns you) to be guilty himself of uttering many *Falsities* both of my self and of others.

I will not conceive my self concern'd with what he speaks Part. 2. p. 31. touching his Dispute with Mr. *Brown*, *An Army Chaplain* (which I never was) about the *Godhead of Christ* [which I ever owned.] That *Perton* was another of the same name, whom I never knew, and his Principles, so far as I have understood them, opposing the Doctrine of the Gospel, I utterly detest; so that all wherein I may by any be supposed to be concern'd, is, what he mentions, pag. 58. 59. Part. 2d.

First, That I am the Author of that Treatise [mentioned by him, as written against Mr. *Tombes*] *against the lawfulness of Communion with Parish Churches*: this is more than Mr. *Baxter* or any of his Informers can prove; and were he able, yet I think his mentioning of it, when in that place, there is not the least occasion for it, is scarce becoming those Principles of *Love* and *Charity* he is so great a pretender to. Whether I writ the Book or not, I conceive it not requisite to give him an account; for I should be unwilling to trust one with a secret, who will, it seems, when the humor takes him,

him,

him, publish to the World, what he cannot, dares not, swear is true, although occasion be thereby given, to such as are no backward to lay hold upon every such opportunity, utterly to ruine the Person of whom he reports it. I shall only add, that, whoever the Author was, I see no cause to disown any thing considerable in that Book: and when Mr. Baxter shall undertake a through discussion of the Arguments contained in it, not like a *Dittator*, but as an humble modest Christian, I will either publicly *Recant* what I have now affirmed, or in meekness debate it with him, provided he doth more candidly represent Arguments, than he hath done many of yours, & particularly, that about *Idolary*, in which you give the general sense of all the Protestants, almost, that have writ upon the *second Command*, who do universally reduce to it, as *Forbidden* there, whatever is added, or devised by men in the worship of God. So that how the present *Conformists* can be excused from some degree of *Idolary*, remains to be better proved, than to call all those, that fear this of them *Ignorant*, *Rash*, and *self-conceited*. This in another would be *Railing*; perhaps Mr. Baxter thinks it *Reckless*, Religion I am sure it is not; nor will it be accounted so by those that conceive of God, as *Holy* and *Jealous*, and therefore dare not join in any thing which he hath not commanded, lest he should charge *folly* and *sin* upon them for doing ignorantly *they know not what*. More may be said, but in this Point, I shall leave Mr. Baxter to you, and if you do not take notice of his perverting his *Adversaries* arguments, and imposing upon them a strange new sense of his own, if you do not reprove him for his vanity, in making *men of straw*, and then unmercifully fighting against them, as if he took a pleasure in demolishing the work of his own hands; if you do not observe and call him to an account for this, you will much wrong your Cause, and deceive my expectation of you.

To come more closely to my self, He informs us, that I am the Author or Publisher of a Book, concerning the Experiences and strange work of God, upon a Gentlewoman in *Worcester*, and that I am uncontroulably affirmed so to be. Give me leave to tell you Sir, that I cannot but wonder at the unparalleled confidence of the man; should he be any longer
suffe-

suffred to take this liberty without controul, I might be supposed, for ought I see, to cumber the World with as many Books, (& perhaps to as little purpose) as some body else: For indeed Sir, in two lines, there are no lesse than two *untruths*. (I may I hope use *Mr. Baxters* word) published to the VWorld concerning me. The First, That I am the *Author and Publisher of that Book*, which is affirmed by him against the most notorious evidence in the VWorld to the contrary. The *Author Mr. Timothy Jerdain*, a precious servant of the Lord, and now at rest with him, subscribed his Name to the Book, and in the Epistle prefixed, owns, and avows himself to be the *Author and Publisher of it*; and all that I did, was (being desired) to write an Epistle, wherein I acquaint the Reader that I am not the *Author of it*, but only did joyn in Testimony to signify what was Recorded in the ensuing Treatise was true. The second *Untruth* is, That I am *uncontrouledly affirmed so to be*, when I believe *Mr. Baxter* hath never a second in the VWorld, that either will or can affirm it.

As for the Book it self, and the matter of fact contained in it, I never yet met with any judicious, sober Christian, (that hath seriously perused it) who durst adventure to pronounce either of the whole, or any considerable part of it, that it was an *effect of Melancholy*. Sir, one of the great designs of the Devil at this day, seems to be to drive men into direct *Atheism*; and there are many too just complaints of its prodigious encrease in the Nation. Whether this decrying of *experiences*, this slighting the *work of Gods Spirit* in the soul, the crying out that these things are but the *effects of Melancholy*, be not the ready way to make all *supernatural conversion* derided, and the whole *Mystery of Godliness* contemned, I leave it with you to consider.

That I was this Gentlewomans *Instructor in the Fifth Monarchy Principle*, and that I was very zealous for it, are two more *untruths*; For I was neither zealous for that Principle, nor her *Instructor*; but I did at that time (ignorantly) oppose her in it; though indeed now it is my opinion, that there is a *Glorious State of the Church* yet to come (before the last end of all things) when all *Oppression* and *Oppressors* shall cease, and every thing of
man

man shall be laid down in a subserviency to the interest of Christ, and the Kingdoms of the World shall become his; which point I am ready to discourse with Mr. Baxter, when ever he shall think fit to doe it.

He is also lamentably mistaken in the account he gives of the Lords dealing with the Gentlewoman, of which I shall give you a few remarks. He tells us --- *First*, that she was suddainly moved to come to hear him Preach; whereas she went (having been long sick after Child bearing) in the accustomed formall manner that others were wont to do.

Secondly, That she had such convictions from his Sermon (for so he seems to intimate) that she went home resolved for an holy Life; whereas she heard little or nothing of his Sermon; it was the Reading of the Text, Rom. 6. 21. that struck her heart; yet she wrestled against her convictions, and would gladly have got from under them, and for that end went into the Company of some friends, thinking to forget them.

Thirdly, that she desired to speak with him is another untruth (a Mistake is too soft a word) For she was hardly prevailed with to go to a Neighbours house to discourse with him.

Fourthly, that she did impose upon her self an Abstinence from Meat; She would gladly have eaten, and attempted it several times, but being under the sence of her own vileness and unworthiness, supposing she had no interest in the Lord, and so no right to the Creature (through the cunning of him that lyes in wait to destroy) she durst not eat.

Lastly, she never fell in so among the Quakers as to be one of them; though it is true, through the Power of Temptation, she was somewhat enclined to them. But from them was marvellously recovered, as is intimated in the fore-mentioned Treatise; and now she remains at as great a distance from them and their principles, as Master Baxter himself; nay (if I understand his principles) at a far greater: being fixed in following after the Lord and his Teachings in and by the Scriptures: And I hope, and am

perswaded, that, after all her shakings, tryals, and temptations, God will for ever establish her here.

Dear Brother, I am sorry that I have given you this trouble, but Love to the Truth, to the interest of the Lord, and to Mr. Baxter's Soul (whom I pray the Lord to forgive and humbly hath compelled me; I leave it to your wisdom to make use of it, as you judge may be most conducing to these forementioned ends, &c.

An Advertisement to the Christian Reader.

IT will I believe easily pass for a *Commendation* of Mr. Baxter's Wit (though but little of his Honesty) that after he hath writ so much against both the King and Bishops, he hath yet such easy access now to the Licencers and Prefs, that he can print Two books before another can Publish a few sheets in answer to One; but his last book about the Sabbath (besides that it might have wholly been spared (Dr. Owen having judiciously and accurately handled that Question before him) doth make so full a discovery of Mr. Baxter's spirit, in pleading for Saints-days, (that is, for Will-worship) and in Atheistically arguing against the Divine and Self-evidencing authority of the Holy Scripture, (which he doth for many Pages together) that henceforth I hope he will no longer be a Snare, but justly be Rejected of all, as one of the worst sort of Heretics; since under the Notion of being a Christian, and a Protestant, he doth with his utmost Industry and Cunning labour to overthrow our Foundation, in that he puts the Credit of Scripture, upon the Truth of History, and denies any Certainty, but what may be gathered from that which dangerous Doctrine I could not but warn thee, Christian Reader, as thou lovest thy Peace and Comfort, as well as the Truth of Christ, thou shalt diligently beware of, and I must leave it to thee to judge whether that Conformity, which such a Person pleads for, is not justly to be suspected.

Edw. Bagshaw